



Office of the Commissioner  
Corporate Services Department

## MEMORANDUM

To: Members of Committee of the Whole

From: Paul Freeman, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Planner

Date: May 7, 2019

Re: A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

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This memorandum provides Committee with a high level summary of the recently released Provincial Growth Plan – A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The amended Growth Plan is part of the broader Provincial initiative under “Ontario’s Housing Supply Action Plan” which is summarized in a separate memorandum to Council.

### **Province released amended Growth Plan on May 2, 2019**

The current Provincial Growth Plan came into effect in 2017. The Growth Plan provides a long-term framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. On January 15, 2019, the Province released proposed Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan. The comment period for Amendment 1 ended on February 28, 2019. York Region provided comments to the Province that were outlined in a report to Committee on [February 21, 2019](#) as amended by Council. On May 2, 2019, the [amended Growth Plan](#) was released by the Province. The revised Growth Plan comes into effect on May 16, 2019.

In addition to the release of the amended Growth Plan, the Province is seeking feedback on proposed modifications to the Minister’s transition regulation, Ontario Regulation 311/06. If approved, the proposed changes to the regulation would transition specific planning matters currently in process. Staff are assessing the impacts of these changes, including the grandfathering of Whitchurch-Stouffville Official Plan Amendment 137 to the 2006 Growth Plan, and will provide feedback to the Province as necessary on the proposed regulation.

**New intensification and density targets are consistent with Council’s recommendations**

Consistent with Council’s comments to the Province on proposed Amendment 1, the intensification target in the new Growth Plan is 50 per cent from the time of the next municipal comprehensive review until 2041. This intensification target is the same for all regions and upper-tier municipalities in the GTHA as well as for the Cities of Barrie, Brantford, Guelph, Orillia and Peterborough and the Regions of Niagara and Waterloo. The remaining upper and single-tier municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe are to establish their own intensification target based on maintaining or improving upon the intensification target contained in their existing official plans.

Also consistent with Council’s recommendation to the Province, the Designated Greenfield Area density target is a minimum of 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare, also matching the target for other municipalities in the GTHA. Outer ring Greater Golden Horseshoe municipalities are to plan for a minimum of 40 residents and jobs combined per hectare in the Designated Greenfield Area. Table 1 below summarizes the intensification and density targets by upper and single-tier municipality

**Table 1  
Growth Plan Intensification and Density Targets**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Minimum Intensification Target</b>	<b>Minimum Density Target</b>
Inner Ring: Regions of York, Durham, Halton, Niagara, Peel and Waterloo; Cities of Barrie, Brantford, Guelph, Hamilton, Orillia and Peterborough	50 per cent	50 residents and jobs per hectare
Outer Ring: City of Kawartha Lakes and Counties of Brant, Dufferin, Haldimand, Northumberland, Peterborough, Simcoe and Wellington	Maintaining or improving upon target in official plan	40 residents and jobs per hectare

## **Provincially significant employment zone mapping has been revised to address minor mapping issues only**

Consistent with Amendment 1, the new Growth Plan provides for a framework for Provincially Significant Employment Zones identified by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Employment areas within these zones would not be able to be converted to non-employment uses outside of a municipal comprehensive review. York Region provided comments on the boundaries of the proposed employment zones as part of the comments on Amendment 1 as revised by Council.

At this time, the Provincially Significant Employment Zone mapping has been revised by the Province to address minor factual errors within Provincially Significant Employment Zones mapped in Amendment 1 based on existing municipal official plans (see Attachment 1). The Province intends to start a process to review requests to consider lands within and outside of Provincially Significant Employment Zones as well as requests to add new zones which include those identified by Regional Council including employment areas along Highway 404 in Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Newmarket and the Keswick Business Park. This assessment is to be based on local planning context, municipal support, provincial interest and other factors.

## **Other changes in the new Growth Plan are consistent with proposed Amendment 1 policies**

Aside from the intensification and density targets discussed above, the other changes to 2017 Growth Plan are consistent with and largely unchanged from Amendment 1. Among the Amendment 1 provisions carried forward are the following:

- One-time employment area conversion window until the next Municipal Comprehensive Review for lands not identified within Provincially Significant Employment Zones
- Simplified criteria for establishing alternative intensification and Designated Greenfield Area density targets
- Potential to undertake small settlement area boundary expansions in advance of a municipal comprehensive review
- Simplified criteria for determining the location of settlement area boundary expansions
- Potential for minor boundary adjustments of non-Greenbelt rural settlements outside of a municipal comprehensive review
- More streamlined and flexible approach for planning Major Transit Station Areas
- Ability to refine Provincial agricultural lands and natural heritage system mapping through the municipal comprehensive review

Changes to the Growth Plan will not change the planned timing of the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review. Staff will continue to monitor forthcoming changes from the Province regarding Provincially Significant Employment Zone mapping and assess the implications of the new Growth Plan on the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review and report back to Council as necessary.

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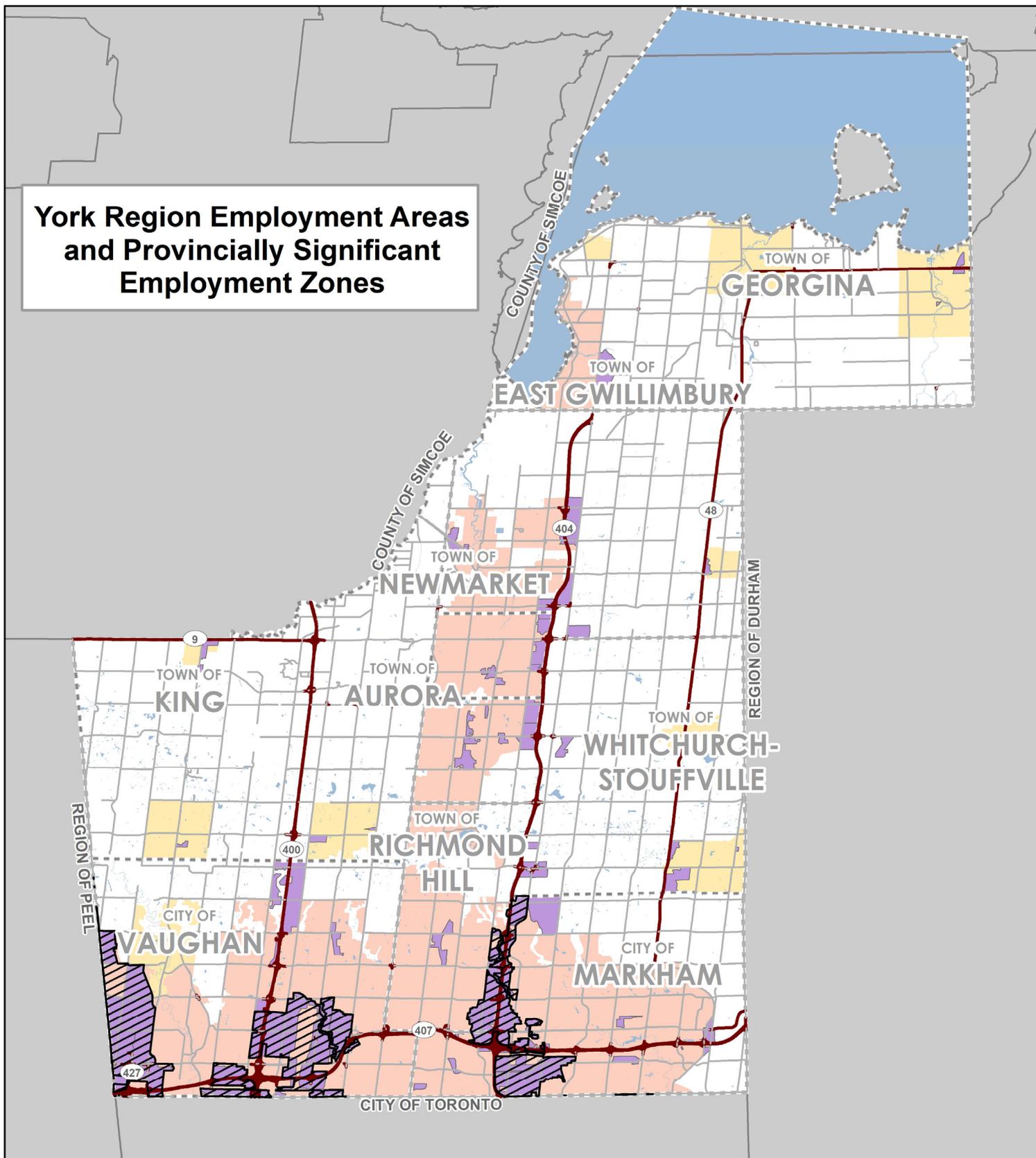
Paul Freeman, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Planner

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Bruce Macgregor  
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments (1)  
eDocs #9469300

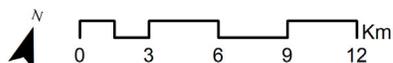
**York Region Employment Areas  
and Provincially Significant  
Employment Zones**



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**Legend**

-  Employment Area
-  Provincially Significant Employment Zones
-  Towns and Villages
-  Urban Area
-  Lake/River
-  Highway
-  Road
-  Railway
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Regional Boundary